

WE CLAIM:

1. In a spreadsheet application system, an improved function set for formulaically redirecting or modifying formula set operations in a spreadsheet, comprising:

a first function for allowing a formula set operation to be redirected or modified to another spreadsheet cell;

a second function for redirecting a formula set to a formulaic location within a spreadsheet cell; and

a third function for allowing an evaluation of a formula set to the spreadsheet cell at formula set-time.

2. The system of Claim 1, whereby the first function is a SETATREF function of the form *SETATREF(reference, [expression to set], [eval as zero])*.

3. The system of Claim 2, whereby the *reference* argument of the SETATREF function is associated with a second spreadsheet cell to which a formula redirection or modification is applied.

4. The system of Claim 3, whereby the *expression to set* argument of the SETATREF function identifies an expression to be set at a second spreadsheet cell.

5. The system of Claim 4, whereby the *eval to zero* argument of the SETATREF function allows for setting a return value of zero for the SETATREF function.

6. The system of Claim 1, whereby the second function is a SETATREFEXPR function of the form *SETATREFEXPR([expression])*.

7. The system of Claim 6, whereby if the SETATREFEXPR function is present in a spreadsheet cell formula, then a second spreadsheet cell formula is set to the spreadsheet cell, the SETATREFEXPR function argument is replaced with the second spreadsheet formula.

8. The system of Claim 7, whereby the *expression* argument of the SETATREFEXPR function provides a result of an expression identified by the *expression* argument.

9. The system of Claim 1, whereby the third function is a SETATREFEVAL function of the form *SETATREFEVAL(expression)*.

10. The system of Claim 9, whereby the *expression* argument of the SETATREFEVAL function identifies an expression to be evaluated at formula set-time.

11. A method of formulaically specifying the redirection or modification of a formula in a spreadsheet application at formula set-time, comprising:

setting a spreadsheet formula to a first spreadsheet cell;

in response to setting the spreadsheet formula to the first spreadsheet cell, obtaining a formula previously set to the spreadsheet cell;

determining whether data associated with the first spreadsheet cell should be redirected to a second spreadsheet cell in response to setting the spreadsheet formula to the first spreadsheet cell; and

if data associated with the first spreadsheet cell should be redirected to the second spreadsheet cell, redirecting data associated with the first spreadsheet cell to the second spreadsheet cell for entry into the second spreadsheet cell.

12. The method of Claim 11, prior to obtaining a formula previously set to the first spreadsheet cell, parsing the spreadsheet formula set to the first spreadsheet cell to determine any required evaluation or recalculation caused by the spreadsheet formula set to the first spreadsheet cell.

13. The method of Claim 11, wherein the spreadsheet formula set to the first spreadsheet cell comprises a value to be evaluated by the formula previously set to the first spreadsheet cell.

14. The method of Claim 11, further comprising determining a cell reference for a second spreadsheet cell from the spreadsheet formula set to the first spreadsheet cell.

15. The method of Claim 14, whereby if no cell reference for a second spreadsheet cell is determined from the spreadsheet formula set to the first spreadsheet cell, determining a cell reference for the second spreadsheet cell from the spreadsheet formula previously set to the first spreadsheet cell.

16. The method of Claim 11, whereby redirecting data associated with the first spreadsheet cell to the second spreadsheet cell includes redirecting data associated with the first spreadsheet cell to the second spreadsheet cell for evaluation by a spreadsheet formula set to the second spreadsheet cell.

17. The method of Claim 11, whereby redirecting data associated with the first spreadsheet cell to the second spreadsheet cell for entry into the second spreadsheet cell includes redirecting data associated with the first spreadsheet cell to the second spreadsheet cell for modifying a spreadsheet formula set to the second spreadsheet cell.

18. The method of Claim 11, whereby if data associated with the first spreadsheet cell should be redirected to the second spreadsheet cell, determining whether the spreadsheet formula previously set to the first spreadsheet cell requires evaluation in response to the spreadsheet formula set to the spreadsheet cell.

19. The method of Claim 18, further comprising evaluating the spreadsheet formula previously set to the first spreadsheet cell in response to the spreadsheet formula set to the first spreadsheet cell.

20. The method of Claim 19, further comprising passing an evaluated result of evaluating the spreadsheet formula previously set to the first spreadsheet cell to the second spreadsheet cell.

21. The method of Claim 20, further comprising passing the evaluated result of evaluating the spreadsheet formula previously set to the first spreadsheet cell for evaluation by a spreadsheet formula set to the second spreadsheet cell.

22. The method of Claim 20, further comprising passing the evaluated result of evaluating the spreadsheet formula previously set to the first spreadsheet cell for modifying a spreadsheet formula set to the second spreadsheet cell.

23. A method of formulaically specifying the redirection and/or modification of a formula in a spreadsheet application at formula set-time, comprising:

obtaining a formula set to a target spreadsheet cell during a formula set operation;

inspecting the obtained formula for any redirection or modification associated with a second spreadsheet cell as identified by the obtained formula;

modifying data contained in the second spreadsheet cell as specified by the obtained formula; and

redirecting the obtained formula to the second spreadsheet cell as specified by the obtained formula.